Utah Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT SUMMIT ACADEMY February 1, 2007

The attached report contains the results of the first two phases (Self-Assessment Process and On-Site Validation Visit) of the Utah Special Education Program Improvement Planning System (UPIPS). This Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process is conducted by the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) Special Education Services (SES), as required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B. The process is designed to focus resources on improving results for students with disabilities through enhanced partnerships between charter school and district programs, USOE-SES, the Utah Personnel Development Center, parents, and advocates.

The first phase of this process included the completion of the Self-Assessment and the development of a Program Improvement Plan. The second phase, On-Site Validation, conducted in Summit Academy on January 8-9, 2007, included student record reviews, interviews with school administrators, teachers, and parents, and classroom observations. Parent surveys were also mailed to a small sample of parents. Information from these data sources was shared in an exit meeting attended by staff from Summit Academy.

This report contains a more complete description of the process utilized to collect data and to determine strengths, areas out of compliance with the requirements of IDEA, and recommendations for improvement in each of the core IDEA areas.

Areas of Strength

The validation team found the following:

General Supervision

- Data collection facilitated an in-depth review of all special education files, alerting the Special Education Department to existing file errors needing to be addressed.
- An overall general satisfaction of the special education program was conveyed by parents of students with disabilities enrolled at Summit Academy.
- The Special Education Department became aware of teacher professional development needs.
- Summit Academy's special education files were developed, listing file requirements on dividers, to easily
 monitor documentation.
- General education teachers understand their responsibilities in the process of developing and implementing IEPs.
- General education teachers understand the importance of including students with disabilities in nonacademic activities and stressed the importance of making all students aware of activities inside and outside the classroom.
- Regular education interventions were attempted before students were referred for special education evaluation.
- Initial evaluations were completed within 60 days of receipt of parent consent.
- Eligibility Determination for each student with disabilities was current and contained in special education files, along with a complete Evaluation Summary Report.
- Students with disabilities were evaluated and determined eligible after meeting the categorical eligibility criteria of Utah Special Education Rules.
- Summit Academy classrooms were inclusive settings in which student with disabilities participated with the use of manipulatives and accommodations.
- Training is provided for all school staff and teachers at the beginning of the school year and during weekly staff meetings. The special education teacher has developed a curriculum for general education teachers and paraeducators that addresses special education needs of the school and confidentiality.
- Special education files were well organized and contained a Record of Access.
- School staff displayed an open and caring attitude towards all students.
- Evidence of ongoing child find process was evident through annual notification to parents, annual staff training, and referrals from both parents and teachers.
- School paraeducators are all highly trained and are included in ongoing training at the school.

Parent Involvement

- Parents are generally happy with the special education services being provided for their students.
- As part of Summit Academy's self-assessment process, all parents of students with disabilities were surveyed by mail.

- All surveyed parents reported that Summit Academy provides all IEP services and goals.
- Parents receive frequent communication on their student's progress.
- Parents are happy with teachers and individualized instruction provided.
- Parents took an active role on the UPIPS Steering Committee. They met in sub-committees, scored surveys, compiled data, and gave feedback on the Program Improvement Plan (PIP).
- Parents felt that teachers were well qualified, helpful, and very involved.
- Parent input was used to gather additional data related to the student's progress and involvement in the general education curriculum.
- Parents are provided with copies of Procedural Safeguards and IEPs.
- Parents participate in meetings either in person or through documented alternative methods.
- Parents feel that their students are benefiting from small group instruction throughout the school.
- The special education teacher has developed and utilized a parent contact form to track parent contacts and ensure that they are ongoing throughout the school year.
- Parents are present and visible throughout the school building and participating in activities such as volunteering in classrooms and making instructional materials.
- Parents are provided with ongoing written progress reports on their student's IEP goals.
- Parents stated that Summit Academy facilitates opportunities for them to provide input into their student's education in many ways.

Free Appropriate Public Education in the Least Restrictive Environment

- IEPs are developed by a team which includes the parent.
- IEPs focus on students with disabilities having access to the general curriculum and being educated with their peers to the full extent that is appropriate for each individual student.
- IEP goals relate to the State Core Curriculum.
- Frequent assessments are used in the classroom as a tool for upcoming lesson planning.
- All students have access to school extra-curricular activities with accommodations made as needed.
- Parents reported that all IEP services have been provided.
- IEPs are all current and are developed with the participation of all required team members.
- Present Level of Academic Achievement and Functional Performance (PLAAFP) statements included baseline data.
- IEP goals were measurable and address areas of student need as documented in the PLAAFP statement.
- Specific special education services were listed on each IEP.
- Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) are utilized as a preventative measure for students engaging in inappropriate behavior.
- Before a student is exited from special education, eligibility is re-determined by a team.
- During classroom observations in the general education classroom, students received accommodations as listed on IEPs and were actively working on IEP goals.
- General education teachers participate in IEP meetings and are provided with access to IEPs under the supervision of the special education teacher.

Transitions

• Summit Academy does not have students of transition age at this time.

Disproportionality

- Summit Academy is comparable to local population and state average data.
- Primary home language documented in student special education files.
- Evaluations conducted following school Policies and Procedures and Utah Special Education Rules.

Areas of Systemic Noncompliance*

- ✓ Regular education interventions did not include data documenting failure before referral to special education was made.
- ✓ Notice of Meetings not documented for review of placement or IEP development.
- ✓ IEPs and Placement are not reviewed at least annually.

^{*}These areas represent items where the visiting team could not locate appropriate documentation of requirements of IDEA 2004 and Utah State Special Education Rules in student records or other data sources.